

Columbia Missourian

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Good Morning! It's Saturday, January 12, 1980

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Iran: Blockade would bring war

Iran offers plan to free hostages

New York Times

UNITED NATIONS — A message from Tehran proposing the release of the American hostages in return for the formation of an international tribunal that would hear Iran's grievances against the deposed shah and the United States delayed a Friday night Security Council debate.

The council was to consider a U.S. plan for a boycott on exports and credits to Iran.

According to a leading Asian diplomat, who asked not to be identified, the delay was due to a message from the authorities in Tehran to Secretary General Kurt Waldheim.

United Press International

Iran and the United States will go to war if Washington tries to block Iranian shipping routes, a top Iranian official said Friday.

In Washington, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance refused to rule out the possibility of a U.S. naval blockade to support an international economic embargo — a Washington-inspired move aimed at forcing Iran to surrender 50 American hostages, held for 69 days.

The logical focus for such a blockade would be the Hormuz Strait at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, the narrow waterway through which is funneled most of the Middle East oil bound for the world's industrialized nations.

"If the American fleet blocks the mouth of the Persian Gulf," Iranian Commerce Minister Reza Sadr told the official Pars news agency Friday, "that will result in war."

In such an event, he said, "the issue will become two-sided" and war will be inevitable.

Washington's veiled threat and Tehran's not-so-veiled counter-threat were exchanged as the U.N. Security Council met to consider a U.S. demand for economic sanctions against Iran and the regime of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. The Soviet Union was expected to veto the resolution.

There was no immediate comment from the 79-year-old Islamic strongman, who was "exhausted" and intends to go into seclusion for 15 days starting Saturday, spokesmen said.

The Security Council already was four days behind the Jan. 7 deadline it had given Iran to free the American hostages or run the risk of a worldwide economic embargo.

By Friday the hostages had spent 69 days in captivity at the U.S. Embassy, and despite the U.N. threat and a report by a Khomeini aide

this week that there had been "some movement," freedom for the hostages did not appear imminent.

The war of words between Washington and Tehran erupted as crisis-ridden Iran enjoyed its quietest day in weeks — free, for the most part, from the demonstrations and violence that have become almost a routine part of daily existence.

The U.S. Navy has ships stationed in both the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea off Iran, all within striking distance of the Hormuz strait dividing Iran and the Gulf states to the south.

Asked whether he would rule out a naval blockade to enforce U.N. sanctions against Iran, Vance replied, "I do not rule it out."

How successful any such blockade would be in hurting Iran was questionable.

Austria already has said it was not prepared to go along with an embargo, and several East-

ern European countries, notably Yugoslavia and Romania, have promised additional economic aid to Tehran.

Sadr said Iran has received offers from Latin American governments to offset the effects of a boycott of Iranian-bound ships by U.S. dock workers, who refuse to load them.

"If America wants to carry out an economic blockade, we shall come out of it as victors."

Meanwhile, the Moslem militants holding the Americans hostage wrapped up an eight-day conference of Third World liberation fronts in Tehran Friday with a call for formation of "an international front of the oppressed" against the United States.

A conference-ending resolution again reflected the bottom-line demands of the militants for release of the hostages — extradition to Iran of deposed Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi.

License plates show personality for just \$12 extra

By Alan Weiner
Missourian staff writer

A year-old method of communication is catching on in Columbia.

Since Jan. 1, 1979, the Missouri Department of Revenue has offered Missourians personalized license plates. For just \$12 extra, anyone registering for Missouri plates can express themselves in permanent pressed metal for five years.

Maybe it was just a further outgrowth of the American love affair with the auto or maybe it was a development of the so-called "Me" decade of the '70s. The popularity of personalized license plates, called vanity plates in some states, has mushroomed. It seems to be a uniquely American way of self-expression, perhaps equivalent to the boom in T-shirts imprinted with messages. And it's an obvious creative outlet as well.

That creativity is evident from talking with some of the people whose curiosity-provoking license plates have been raising eyebrows around town.

One look at George Madison's 1975 Chevy van leaves no question about his marital status. His plates read "NO WIFE."

Madison said he was married but was divorced recently. "All my friends joked that I was destined to be married again. So I got the plates when they were available to show them I was serious. After all, I have to have the plates for five years," Madison said.

When reminded that his plates run out in four years, Madison said, "That's OK, I'll definitely be renewing them."

There seems to be no shortage of ski burns in Columbia, if license plates are a guide.

Terry Lewis, 21, of 2609 White Gate Drive, has plates that read "SKI-MO." Ms. Lewis said the idea for the plates was born when she saw a poster that promoted skiing in the state.

Ms. Lewis said she was once stopped by another motorist who inquired about the plates.

"This guy stopped me and asked if I was a member of a Missouri ski club. He said he was from a ski club in Colorado and wanted to find out more about the ski enthusiasts in the area," Ms. Lewis said.

Terry was surprised to learn that she was not the only



No one has trouble knowing the make of car Eston Ellis drives

Court tells panel it cannot meet in closed session

By Andy Maykuth
Missourian staff writer

A committee reviewing the city's labor negotiations will vote this afternoon whether to open its meetings to the news media after Boone County Circuit Court Judge Frank Conley ordered the committee not to meet in private.

In issuing a temporary restraining order Friday, Conley said the Columbia Labor Negotiations Review Committee, appointed last year by the City Council, was a public governmental body as defined in Missouri's open meetings law and therefore has to conduct its business in public.

Committee members voted in December to close the meeting to allow a more frank discussion of the city's labor relations.

But Conley's restraining order, sought by Columbia Daily Tribune Managing Editor Carolyn White, forces the committee to meet publicly or prove its case in court.

Committee Chairman John Mikrut said the committee would vote to reconsider opening the meeting at 1 p.m. today in the Columbia Public Library.

If the committee votes to meet privately, then the meeting must adjourn and the city counselor would have to appear before Conley Monday morning to "show cause" why the temporary restraining order should not be made permanent.

But City Counselor Scott Snyder said that hearing "won't come off. If they choose to open the meeting, as I'm sure they will, then the point is moot."

Mikrut has contended that the com-

mittee is an informal advisory committee, appointed by Mayor Clyde Wilson. Thus, he said, the committee is not a "public governmental body" as defined by the state's "sunshine law."

Snyder agreed earlier this week the committee falls under a "gray area" of the open meetings law, but advised Mikrut to open the meeting.

Mikrut, although he favors an open meeting, said some committee members who deal with private labor groups feared possible conflicts with what they might say pertaining to municipal labor unions.

In a news release, Ms. White disputed the committee's first contention, saying the scheduled closed meeting would be "clearly illegal."

She notes that Wilson appointed the committee members, but the committee was created by council resolution Oct. 15. Therefore, she said, its deliberations were subject to the open meetings law.

"What concerns us more than the topics to be discussed at this meeting is the dangerous precedent involved."

Reflecting on the week's flurry of events, Mikrut said Friday the committee's plans to meet behind closed doors has been overplayed. "I mean, a restraining order?"

Without naming the Tribune, he said, "The news media really took this and blew this greatly out of proportion; more than it really is."

"I could just as easily swing either way. But other committee members," concerned about possible conflicts, desired a closed meeting.

"It wasn't that we were trying to go behind the press' back."

MFA's leader hears report on embargo

Following a grain embargo briefing with President Carter, MFA President Eric Thompson said Friday that although he supports U.S. efforts to buy the grain itself he still thinks farmers will be hurt by the action.

"If agriculture is going to continue to be used as a weapon as part of our foreign policy, it will spell the end of our family farms," Thompson said.

Thompson attended a forum in Washington Friday held to update

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farm leaders on the grain embargo against Russia, the current Afghanistan situation and the Iranian hostage crisis.

"I feel the administration's purpose for the meeting was to win our support for their position," Thompson said, "but I really don't think it was effective, especially with the agricultural people."

"The trip was worthwhile, even though there was no specific USDA program outlined to help the farmer. There is still the concern that the steps planned by the USDA to help the farmer will not be enough. We did, however, get to leave input during the two-hour session, and that was important. I believe we were heard."

Heading the briefing of the 100 or so participants was Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and other top Cabinet officials. Thompson said the overriding concern seemed to be the present national security philosophy. Carter presented the administration's position on protecting the hostages and mobilizing support from the international community.

"He ruled out the military option," Thompson said. "It's obvious to us farmers the course of action he took."

Area farmers sit tight through embargo

By Eric Johnson
Missourian staff writer

While traders in Kansas City and Chicago frantically unloaded grain contracts this week in the wake of the Soviet grain embargo, Central Missouri farmers sat tight.

Four area grain elevators have seen little traffic since the embargo was imposed last Friday by President Carter. Elevator managers said farmers who have yet to sell this year's corn, wheat and soybeans are taking a wait-and-see attitude.

"We've advised our customers not to panic but to sit tight and see what will happen," said Gene Truesdell, manager

of the Truesdell Brothers elevator in Clark. Truesdell said there were a few wheat sellers at his elevator Friday as prices made a moderate comeback.

Managers at the Centralia, Jefferson City, and Columbia MFA elevators said they have received no new grain contracts since the embargo began. The only movement has been for contracts signed before the embargo.

Prices for corn and wheat futures rose slightly Friday on the Chicago and Kansas City grain exchanges after two days of heavy losses, but wheat averaged 20 cents per bushel below the pre-embargo levels, and corn remained about 12 cents under. Soybean prices

Insight

closed higher for the second day in a row, but have not recovered to last Friday's levels. Market analysts and traders expressed relief that prices did not fall as much as had been feared.

But the less-than-expected price drops have not settled farmers whose storage bins are full of grain.

"The prices have got to go back (to pre-embargo levels) or a lot of farmers won't make it through the year," said Centralia farmer Charles Fountain.

Fountain said he is storing 8,000 bushels of soybeans and 12,000 bushels of corn in the hopes that prices will rise again. He's better off than some, however, because a milo crop he sold earlier this month will balance his farm finances.

Other farmers Fountain knows are "just sittin' tight and still trying to grin," he said.

Another Centralia farmer, Lyndell Galloway, is holding 11,000 bushels of soybeans in bins, but says he's been lucky, too.

"I'm just glad I sold beans and milo in December. I got some hogs to sell and I hope that'll take care of taxes," Rising fuel, seed and fertilizer

prices, along with income taxes and recently increased Social Security taxes, will mean hard times for most farmers, especially for those who are forced to sell grain at embargo prices, Galloway said. Next year's crops will cost farmers about \$10 to \$12 per acre more than last year, he said.

"As far as the government helping us, I'd just count that out," said Galloway. "They're just looking after their own skins."

Roger Gilbert, assistant manager of the Columbia MFA elevator on Route B, said the embargo may have kept some farmers from selling grain at his elevator, but "slow movement is normal for this time of year."

Chinese sales spur wheat futures

From our wire services

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — The wheat future market on the Kansas City Board of Trade Friday rebounded sharply upwards, apparently spurred by reports that China was once again entering the market for U.S. grain.

Walter Vernon, executive vice president of the Board of Trade, refused to speculate about the renewed optimism by traders, but admitted there had been talk on the floor for the past 24 hours about China wanting to buy more wheat.

"The report is that China is in the market," he said. "That's all I know."

In Washington, the U.S. Agriculture Department reported that China had purchased 300,000 tons (270,000 metric tons) of grain. There were no immediate reports whether additional purchases would be made.

Friday's wheat future prices opened above the previous closing on the Board of Trade for the first time since President Carter's announced embargo of grain to the Soviet Union.

The rally actually began late Thursday after rumors began circulating about possible purchases by China. By the end of the day, more than 43 million bushels of wheat — a record for January — had been traded amid heavy export and commission house buying. Several individual trades were for 500,000 bushels apiece.

Thursday wheat future contracts closed at 7 to 12 1/4 cents a bushel higher in a relatively slow trading morning.

March contracts climbed 12 1/4 cents to 4.27 1/2; May stood at 4.38 1/2, up 11 1/4; July climbed to 4.39 1/2, up 8; September rallied to 4.48, up 7; and December rose to 4.58, up 7.

Since President Carter halted the sale of 17 million metric tons (19.7 million tons) of grain to Russia a week ago, the Kansas City market has seen a full range of emotions. With the board closed Monday and Tuesday at the order of the government, traders waited nervously for Wednesday's opening bell, lambasting government interference in the marketplace.

Wednesday's opening saw the fu-

tures market drop the full 25-cent limit in a matter of seconds, with grainmen speculating that the embargo reaction would mean a loss of anywhere from 40 cents to \$1 a bushel. There was sell fever, but no major buyers. Speculation at that time had been that the market was in for several days of sharp price dives.

Thursday's market fared little better, falling to 20 cents down before it finally rallied at midmorning for a slight gain, 3/4 of a cent to four cents a bushel. More than 40 million bushels of wheat were sold, a January record.

Friday's rebound was predicted by very few traders.

March wheat futures were trading at \$4.44 1/4 on the Kansas City market hours before Carter's embargo announcement a week ago. Friday's closing of \$4.27 1/2 represented a loss of only 15 1/4 cents, far less than what some analysts had forecast.

"The panic in the market, people wanting to sell at any price, is gone," said board spokesman Rod Turnbull.

Inside today

Gary's home!

Gary Anderson, the former Kewpie running back who now does his galloping for Lou Holtz and the Arkansas Razorbacks, is home for semester break. On Page 6, Anderson reminisces about his first season there.

In town today

Noon to 10 p.m. Central Missouri Boat, Sports and Travel Show, Hearnes Center. Admission \$2 adults, \$1 University students, 75 cents children 6-12, free under 6.

Movie listings on Page 13